

Parliamentary Staff Institute

January 2012



David Dreier, Chairman • David Price, Ranking Democratic Member

Strengthening Research and Analysis in the Legislature

From January 23 to 27, 2012, the House Democracy Partnership (HDP) organized a weeklong Parliamentary Staff Institute on legislative research and analysis for 26 staff from 13 HDP partner countries: Afghanistan, Georgia, Haiti, Indonesia, Iraq, Kenya, Kosovo, Lebanon, Liberia, Mongolia, Pakistan, Peru, and Timor-Leste. This program was organized in cooperation with the International Republican Institute (IRI), the National Democratic Institute (NDI), and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). Developing the capacity of legislative research staff is a central component of the House Democracy Partnership's work with its partner legislatures.

The Parliamentary Staff Institute included presentations and discussions with top officials from the Congressional Research Service (CRS), including the Director. In addition, delegates received an introduction to the U.S. Congress, the role of CRS within Congress, and an overview of the Law Library of Congress.

Current and former CRS staff provided the participants an overview of basic legislative research and analysis techniques including basic policy analysis, developing alternatives for the legislature, the importance of defining the issue, and conducting impact analysis. The importance of conducting outreach to legislative clients was also highlighted and HDP Ranking Member David Price conducted a session on a Member of Congress' view of the critical need for impartial, unbiased legislative research.

The program further provided the delegates with skills-based sessions focused on the types of products and services of a research service, writing for the legislature, and the overarching need for objectivity and review protocols. Information research professionals also shared guidance on publicly available research sources and linking library and research services for parliaments.

This was the eighth Parliamentary Staff Institute organized by HDP since the commission was established in 2005. In addition to its Parliamentary Staff Institutes, HDP's programs for legislative staff have included combined member/staff training seminars in Washington, Regional Staff Institutes, and delegations of current and retired U.S. congressional staff to advise HDP partners in targeted areas of development.